The concept of Tauhīd in the mystic poetry of Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf bhitāī

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ABSTRACT

Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf bhitāī, whom his followers decorate with different names and symbols including Lakhino Laṭif, Lal Laṭif, Bhittai Ghott, Murshid Laṭif is one of most prominent poet of Kalhora Era of Indus Valley Civilization. The expression of idealsim in unique style and giving deep insight to every subject which he brought in his poetry has made a philosopher poet going shoulder to to shoulder to world famous poets. According to Allama II Kazi, the Shah of Bhit is the greatest poet of the world. In his masterpiece writings '*casual peeps of Sophia'* and '*brown girl in the search of God',* Allama II Kazi has compared Shāh ʿAbdul latīf bhitāī through various elements of poetic and symphonic standards to other great European poets including Shakespeare, Willam Words worth, John Miltion, Keats, Coleridge and Tennyson. Kazi terms Shah a natural poet without any bend and dint in his idea and reformation in it. He wrote what came in his heart and mind.

Shāh is composer of 30 Mega Surs initiating from Kalyan to Karyal. Through his splendid metaphoric and symbolical style, the concept of Tauhīd or oneness of God is the core subject of his poetry.

Shāh is peculiar poet in the mystic school of thought to have connected mysticism with Shariʿah and never goes any inch out of its ambit.

Key words: Karyal, Kalyan, Qālū Balā, kalhora, Jogī, Sāmī, Sasuī

Introduction

Among the basic injunctions of Islam, the concept of Tauhīd is supreme. It deals with the unity of existence. It elaborates the definition of superiority, magnanimity and oneness of the master of universe. It is the cardinal factor of faith, which calls upon every soul to have his, her affirmation in the unity of

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existence. Any individual deviating from the concept of tauhīd or having doubt in it is termed as non-believer or kāfir. The Holy Quran is very visible in the context of Tauhīd. It visibly quotes:

"There is nothing like Him and He is the hearer, the Seer" (42:11)

The above āyat very clearly elucidates the concept of Tauhīd. It defines that oneness of the lord of universe as matchless and omnipotent. He is one and all powers belong to Him. He has the power of seeing and hearing. It clearly tells us that nothing is beyond of His ambit. The Surah Ikhlāṣ very elaborately calls upon human being to endorse with your tongue:

Say you, He is the one
Allah is independent, care free
He begot none, nor was He begotten
Nor anyone is Equal to Him.

Discussing the concept of Tauhīd, every believer is with one and single opinion and belief that the question of the unity of existence is undisputed, unquestionable and out of human approach to apply rational questions with it.
Shah ʿAbdul Laṭīf Bhittai is a inspirational poet, who inspires human being in all thick and thin moments in spiritual as well physical terms. He teaches differently as per the rhythm of his class and academic environment, his nuance always differently grudge in ascending order, he is always seen endorsing to march ahead but never let his pupils to abjure anything by perceiving its negativity but insisting on changing it in optimistic order, this was all, a true guide and mentor could bring in the hearts and minds of their noble characters sitting before him to utter his lesson of love and humility every day in his 63 episodes of life in dunes of Bhit Shah.

Shah Sāīn initiates his poetry with Sur Kalyān is consist of five episodes, its preamble episode goes in depth to the unity of existence which is the central factor of faith while the other episodes are also related with that centrality of thought but have different subject. In episode two, Shah Sain dilate upon the criterion of true seeking, he differs between a devoted Ṣufī and those who pretend lust as worldly success, In episode three, Shah Sāīn talks with vanity and deceit keepers and their state of heart and mind to have contaminated the concepts of fidelity with their perverted intellect. In episode four, his centrality of discussion is devotion, he paraphrases on how to be a devout devotee, what integral elements are mandatory to ascend to the destination of piety and

piousness. In chapter fifth, the beloved poet presents a devotee as daring, fearless and brave element of society who doesn't bother to decorate gibbet for seeking truth. He presents him as a debonair scarified for his or her prime object.

From literary points of view, Kalyan perceptibly leads to eternal peace and serene state of life for conscientious seekers but to Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf bhitāī which is impossible without truly understanding and believing the concept of existence of unity (waḥdatul Wujūd), which is the core subject he discussed in Sur Kalyan. To him the eternal peace and tranquility is only destined for those who truly understood the concept of unity of existence and proceeded on it with firm faith and remained unwavering. His philosophy of life determines its relativity with wahdatul Wujūd concept, which he has derived from La illaha, illallāh as defined in Holy Quran. Holy Quran Says "Qālū rubbnallāh, thumma staqāmū, wala khaufun allayhim, wala hum yaḥazanūn" (And said Allah is our Rabb, and remained affirmed on it, there is no jeopardy for them).

As discussed above Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf bhitāī is that great poet, who has brought ample changes in the standard of Sindhi poetry by bringing it within the concept of Tauhīd and shunning the misconceptions which were brought in its fold with false pretension of love.

He is one and peerless: is truth of monism
Deluded are they: who embraced dualism

In the above verse Shah has fully reflected the message of Surah Ikhlāṣ that He is peerless. Shah warns all those who adults this basic injunction with their own created versions of love. He terms them deluded/ went in wrong path by shifting their faith to dualism, which is in no way acceptable to God Almighty.
Shaykh Muḥyiddīn [illegible] b. ʿAlī alais Ibn ʿArabī commonly known as Shaykh Al-Akbar (1164 AD) was born in South Spain was the founder of the concept of waḥdatul Wujūd. Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf bhitāī and his contemporary scholars Makhdūm Muʿīnuddin Thattwi, Mian [illegible] Dino Faqeʿr of Darāzā, Pīr Muḥammad Baqā Lakyārī, Father of Pīr Muḥammad Rāshid Rāshadī alias Roze Dhanī (RA), ʿAbdul [illegible] Grohrī, with whom, Shah Sāīn had spiritual knots were the followers of Ibn ʿArabī and his concept of waḥadat ul Wujūd, which is thoroughly governing the poetry of Shāh of Sindh.

G.M Syed in his book Payghām-e-Laṭīf writes that there was immense homogeneity of thought between Moalānā Rūmī and Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf Bhitāī, that's why he always used to keep Mathanawī Rūmī with himself and also referred some verses from Mathanawī in his Risālo. As Ibn ʿArabī is the founder of the conception of waḥadatul Wūjūd but Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf Bhitāī understating the gist of the concept took it to the new vistas and heights of understanding for the common people in his easy and charming poetry.

Shah redeveloped the standards of Mysticism (Ṣufism) with new orientations and symbolism. To him Ṣufi is not a cult but it is an approach of finding truth. It is a venture and who is a true Ṣufī, the greatest poet of world himself elaborates the merit of a Ṣufi.

Ṣufi has no sect: no one knows his creed
Waging war within: he leaves no trace
Ready ever rescue: his bitter enemies

He is the one who wages war within, with ego, conceit and over indulgence to the worldly pleasures. To him these elements are the obvious enemies making one pessimistic and detract him from virtuous path. The primary quality of a Ṣufī is to be self satisfied and never peeps for any desire or gain and becomes dejected when offered anything. They are away from gains and luxuries of life. They are seekers of profusion which they attain through their affiliation with their lord- real destination of their satisfaction.

Peeved being bestowed: Pleased when denied
Ṣufī they became: after having self abnegated

A true Ṣufī is always in search of God through different approaches. Self abnegation is also amongst the prime qualities of a true Ṣufī. They neither possess anything nor did desire for anything, their inner soul and heart only beat Allah as their lord to whom they have made an everlasting pledge. They are different from others; they read and memorize the lesson of pain.

Suffering in Solicitude: revise lesson of pain
Reciting silently: template of mediation
Peruse only page: where they see Sweetheart

Ṣufī is not a cult but it is an approach of finding truth. It's a venture and who is a true Ṣufī, the greatest poet of world himself elaborates the merit of a Ṣufī. Imām Ghazalī says that monotheism is the cherished philosophy and approach for a Ṣufī to attain. The whole marathon of his / her life exists upon it. Shah too followed the same mystical thought. He too persue the same page where he finds sweetheart.

Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf Bhitāī has reflected Tauhīd in each of his verse with different metaphoric orders. In some places, he takes the hardships of Sasuʾī to attain the lord, he finds worldly lust in the shape of mūmal as an obstacle to approach lord, he symbols Marwī as true and patriotic symbol having full faith in her lord to repulse all her agonies.

In Sur Āsā, Shāh Sāīn discusses the philosophy of immersion with beloved, which probably no poet had so vividly discussed. This one is a unique expression.

Those who have immersed with beloved
Their very sleep is prayer. The accustom their
Eyes with sleep and get dreams
They are relived of all worldly worries and sorrows

The word "immersed" has been used by Shāh Sāīn used for the veritable seekers. It meanings absorption, complete assimilation with their beloved, Its moment of deep pondering for we all to gaze, that who they could be, to find complete assimilation with their lord.

The state of assimilation with lord is never an easy task. It involves in deep hardships and struggle to climb to such a state.

The vistas of Allah's clemency are always open and its needs the one to seek His pleasure by begging at His doorstep. Shah calls upon devotees to vibrate the string of your desire with only and only oneness and nothing else because he is the owner of the Day of accountability and master of Earth and Heavens. So to have His favor says ʿAbdul Laṭif Bhitāī that all efforts be materialized to have His pleasure

In Sur Ghātū, Shāh warn those who became ignorant with worldly pleasures, and life of conceit

Growing too fat: oh Monster! You but all around
Days of the water over: that you deemed deluge

He brings in human mind that world is a transitory period, no one can permanently live here. So they should be mindful of the eternal life to come.
In Sur Sasuʾī Ābri, Shāh Sāīn communicates the eternal message of everlasting struggle to attain lord. Through Sasuʾī, he calls upon human being the love cannot be attained by merely sleeping or sitting idle.

Get going on, oh lady! Sans waiting in Bhmabore
Sleeping suffer, says Seyed: in shock and anxiety
Angelic Ketch Master: renowned to honor pledges

Had it been easy for all to cherish their ideals, Sasuʾī would never have to embark on life sacrificing struggle.
The philosophy of firm faith is best indicator of human resoluteness. This is clearly seen in Sur Suhnī. Shah Sāīn profoundly described in Sur Suhnī.

Better broke pitcher: do not lose heart
Swim on raft of: despair not in mercy of God
Fervency of Affable: shall get you to Mehar

Loosing heart is the symbol of cowardice and irresoluteness. Those who are brave always come in front of waves and hard targets. This is what Shāh Sāīn has portrayed in Sur Suhnī. He calls upon human being to clean their hearts and minds from despair. Never have any doubt on the mercy of the lord of universe. He is near to jugular Vein.

Conclusion.

The above discussed article is simple reflection of Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf Bhitāī and his idealism of Tauhīd as cardinal factor of our Faith. The poetry of Shāh Sāīn has fully imbibed monotheism as basic factor in his poetry. Moalānā Ghulām Muṣṭafā Qāsmī terms poetry of Shāh Sāīn, a process of preaching through poetry. In his poetic order, Shāh Sāīn brought the concept of Tauhīd in such a splendid way that it can simply be perceived as translation or commentary on Holy Quran. The great scholars of world are of the opinion that Shāh ʿAbdul Laṭīf is a philosopher poet.
The continuity, coherence and eloquence of his poetry rank him among the greatest poets of world. From symbolism, symphonic and descriptive order, Shāh ʿAbdul laṭīf Bhitāī is a matchless poet having universality of thought in describing local ideas, cultural events and folk stories into viable metaphoric

subjects. No poet in the world has such great descriptive quality, what Shāh of Bhit has reflected in his poetry.

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